

TOWN OF MANSFIELD
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF AUGUST 10, 2009

Members Present: B. Clouette, G. Nesbitt, Mayor Paterson (ex officio)

Other Council Members Present: H. Koehn

Staff Present: M. Hart, C. Trahan, D. Dagon, P. Jeffers

Guests: None

Meeting to order at 6:00pm.

1. Minutes from 7/13/09 meeting approved as presented
2. Preliminary 2009/10 Fiscal Results – Cherie Trahan presented the Preliminary Schedule of Estimated Change in Fund Balance as of June 30, 2009. Net activity for the fiscal year is a positive \$11,605, increasing fund balance from \$1,661,693 to \$1,673,298. Planned expenditure reductions compensated for a \$458,631 shortage in revenues. Matt Hart recognized all Department Heads and the Finance Department for anticipating the revenue shortage and taking steps to control expenditures. Bruce Clouette also commended Matt Hart and staff for the actions taken to bring in a balanced budget.
3. Chief Dagon reviewed his memo dated 8/6/09, Rescue Billing Q & A. Discussion centered around whether rescue services should be billed out at all or if they should be considered a fundamental service provided by a government. The Committee will come back and review whether the technical aspects of the billing are developed sufficiently. Then the issue will be brought back to the full Council for discussion on the philosophical question.
4. Legal Services – Gene Nesbitt discussed his concerns/questions surrounding the use of legal counsel, including invoicing, actual time involved for various items, process for referring items to legal counsel, the town attorney contract, etc. Helen Koehn discussed hiring an attorney on a retainer basis rather than on an hourly billing. Discussion also centered around ways to control legal costs, on what criteria the Council appoints a Town Attorney, and how does the Council stay informed on the use of legal counsel. A brief summary will be included in the quarterly financial reports listing the issues that have been referred to the Town Attorney.
5. Capital Projects bonding – Matt Hart discussed the schedule of bonded capital projects. The schedule lists projects with bonding authorized but not yet issued, and projects adopted in the CIP budget that still need bond authorization. Authorization for the Four School Renovation design project can be held off until a project is approved and construction needs authorization. The Committee agreed that a communication should be presented at the next Town Council meeting requesting approval to put bond authorization questions on the November ballot for: Hunting Lodge Road walkway, Stone Mill Bridge repairs, Laurel Lane Bridge repairs, and the Salt Shed. Lastly, the authorization for a \$1,000,000 bond issue for Open Space approved in November, 2006 is elapsing this fiscal year. Per the Charter, bond authorization will lapse if there have been no expenditures or encumbrances against the appropriation for three fiscal years.

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The Committee agreed to ask for Council's approval to put a question on the ballot to re-authorize bonds for Open Space. Council approval is needed before September 3, 2009 in order to be put on the ballot in November.

6. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.

Motions:

Motion was made to accept the July 13, 2009 minutes by Gene Nesbitt and seconded by Bruce Clouette. Motion so passed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cherie Trahan
Director of Finance